:: Vol. 4, No. 6 ::
:: :: June, 1928 :: ::

Borgo S. Spirito, 5
Rome (113), Italy

ACIES ORDINATA



THE DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY REVIEW
ISSUED BY THE
.: :: CENTRAL SECRETARIATE OF SODALITIES OF OUR LADY :: ::

For circulation among Ours only

THE DIRECTRESS IN CONVENT SODALITIES

Any one who has ever had to direct a Sodality in a convent, knows very well that considera'le difficulties sometimes arise because the sisters wish to exercise an excessive control over the Sodality if not also over the Director. Hence *the rights and duties of the Sister Directress* have often been discussed in Directors' Congresses and the conclusion always has been that the Sister if prudent and strenuous, can be a great help to the Director by relieving him of attention to minor details, but she should not be allowed any jurisdiction whatever as regards the management of the Sodality. To have two governments in the Sodality, each independent of the other, would be intolerable, since it would be destructive of order and unity and of the Director's authority. The Directress's rights are whatever the Director sees fit to concede her, and nothing more.

The Director should know these principles and proceed accordingly. If, as often happens, the sister is prudent and submissive, the matter is easy. If she is lacking in this respect, she must be shown with great charity and patience but also very clearly that her duty is to help the Director but that she has no right to govern. If it appear to her or to the Superioress of the house that something should be changed or omitted in the government of the Sodality, they are at liberty to propose the change, but have no right to demand or order it, unless the question concerns the degree of hospitality to be extended by the convent to the Sodality, whether it is to be restricted, or enlarged, or to be practiced in another way. But though the Sisters have this perfect right to their own house, it by no means follows therefrom that they have a right in the government of the Sodality.

A special difficulty in this matter usually arises with regard to the Sodalities of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart. As we are very often besought by these religious to direct their Sodalities, the following points should be noted:

1. *The Sodalities of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart are* **not the same as our own.** These Religious received special decrees from Leo XII in 1825 and later from Pius IX, which authorize them to ask the Ordinary of the place to erect one Sodality of Our Lady in each of their convents, and special indulgences have been granted to those Sodalities.

2. Those Sodalities differ from ours also in this that

a) **only one can be erected** in any given house (though such Sodalities may be divided into various groups), and

b) Besides the priest-Director, the statutes of those Sodalities also prescribe that there shall be **a Sister-Directress,** whose duty it is in the name of the Superioress to act like the mother of a family, keeping an eye on everything which is done in her house, and admitting to the Sodality, only such persons as she deems worthy of the intimacy of the house. (1)

3. Nevertheless the Ladies like to have their Sodalities aggregated to our Prima Primaria, both because the indulgences granted the latter are much wider and because the Ladies themselves are devoted to the Society. (Canon 723, however, prohibits such aggregations).

4. According to the rules of their Sodalities the activities of the apostolate are recommended but rather as means of self-sanctification and mutual edification, and providing they are such as are suitable for

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(1) Thus the Sisters have declared: *One may observe here that as the seat of our Sodalities should always be placed in our houses or annexes, the Society and the house not only have the right but the duty to be represented by a Directress, who holds the place of the Mother of the family, being bound to watch over what passes in her dwelling, and to admit to her hearth only those whom she judges worthy of her intimacy.*„

the female sex. These requirements are evidently not as broad as those of our Sodalities.

5. As the rules prescribe that only one of those Sodalities may be erected in a convent, (although it may have many divisions), and as on the other hand a single Sodality can hardly be made up of matrons of high society, little girls in the elementary schools and young women studying in the Universities, – and since it would only be a pure legal fiction to regard such widely differing groups as a single Sodality with many divisions (they would have nothing in common but the convent in which they were housed),-*the Ladies usually found* **one Sodality of their own** *(Children of Mary of the Sacred Heart), and have* **several others** *as Sodalities of Our Lady* **adapted to our rules.** But besides having a priest as Director, the latter Sodalities **also have a Directress** who follows the methods of the Ladies' own Sodalities.

Now a prudent Director of a convent Sodality will generally permit a Sister to help him in directing the Sodality. But there is a substantial difference between a helper and a Directress, between a person who simply assists and another who has a real right to govern, simultaneous with and almost as great as that of the Director.

According to the Rules approved by our Very Rev. Father General Wernz and the pontifical documents by which our Sodalities are ruled, it is determined that the Director alone enjoys the fulness of governmental power (Cf. *Common Rules 16, 44, 49, 50).* Those rules and documents make no mention of a "Directress," (though this is quite natural since they were drawn up primarily and directly for Sodalities in our houses.) "**Directresses" may be admitted however,** but only as "*First Prefects*", or "*Sub-directresses*", but never as Directresses with governmental powers equal to those of the Director. They may watch over what pertains to domestic discipline, but according to the rules and spirit of our Sodalities *they can decree nothing nor block anything relative to the government of the Sodality* such, for example, as to reject a certain Sodalist whom the Director thinks should be admitted. But in reality the good Sisters claim the right to do such things, and as experience shows, they sometimes act accordingly even against the will of the Director, just as if the Sister were the real ruler of the Sodality and the priest-Director merely its chaplain.

The following should therefore be observed in practice:

1. Ours should not easily undertake the direction of a Sodality where they are not given a free hand to direct it according to the rules of our Sodalities. They may tell the Sisters that they will glady accept a helper, but not a co-Directress in the strict sense of the word, and that the full power of direction, admission, etc., must dwell in the Director alone, although he will always give due consideration to the just desires of the Sisters in whose house the Sodality is situated.

2. If however the Sisters cannot agree to these terms, they are free to choose a non-Jesuit Director.

3. If the Sisters wish in addition to their own Sodality to have others which are to be aggregated to our Prima Primaria, we must take care, as far as we are concerned, that at least in these latter Sodalities, our rules be observed and that the Director, whether he be one of us or not, have the full power of direction left to him.

4. If this double-government system is so rooted that it seems unchangeable, it may be tolerated for a while, but even then one should try to have our system wholly adopted. If the Sisters make an objection of their rules, we may counter with our own, and if we undertake the direction of a woman's Sodality, it is only right that we should manage it our own way. Besides the good Sisters are quite inconsistent, if while protesting their great devotion to the Society, they refuse us full liberty in governing the Sodality, and make use of us solely as chaplains or ecclesiastical counsellors, so that our decisions must always be submitted to the Superior and receive her approval before they can have any force

Moreover, when a Sodality of any kind is erected in a convent, the need of liberty for the Director and for the Sodality too, especially as regards the exercise of the apostolate, is more necessary than in other Sodalities, because the good Sisters are often without sufficient knowledge of the needs of souls in the present circumstances and therefore (with the best of good will) they often obstruct good work. Hence we have often heard experienced Fathers, say they would much rather direct women's Sodalities outside of convent's than those within. While we shrink from subscribing to any such general proposition, certainly it does seem to us that the reason why convent Sodalities often give scanty results and that Ours waste their time with them, is because the Director lacks full control of the Sodality.

In brief, we take it as a maxim that many can help a Sodality, but only one can direct it.

Polish Theologians Sodality Academy.

Following the mind of Our Very Reverend Father General, that we should not come to Directorship unprepared, we are giving earnest attention to our Sodality Academy. Its sessions are held on holidays, so as not to conflict with the other academies. The first half-hour is employed in discussing the questions it raises. Important themes of practical value have been considered, such as, the Director's methods, the scope of the Sodality, the relations of Sodalities with each other, ways of cooperation between Sodalities, the relations of Ours with the Sodality in parishes, etc.

Rev. Father Rector, who is well-versed in Sodality affairs, is usually present at our meetings. On his suggestion, we develop the subjects given us for the **« Toni »** as **talks to Sodalists.** So we look to our Sodality Academy for the theory of Directorship, and to the "Toni" for its practice. Almost all the theologians attend the meetings; and about half of them have promised to take an active part.

St. Skudrzyk, S. J.
Prefect of the Sodality Academy

SCHOOL-MISTRESSES' SODALITIES

I.

Saragossa, Spain.

This Sodality adopted the excellent principle, that every Sodalist should live as if the whole progress of the Sodality depended upon her.

In obedience to the directions of the late Cardinal Reig († 1927), **study circles** were founded, and the Director and Sodalists joined in discussing matters of great utility to the members, such as *education in the United States*, and *the education of the school-teacher;* debates were held on such subjects as the advisability of *preparing girls for public life.* Special sessions were held in honor of *St. Aloysius and St. Stanislaus.*

During Holy Week of last year, the teacher-Socialists gave much time to *spiritual exercises;* many of them going straight to their schools after Mass, Holy Communion, and Meditation.

At the end of the last school year, *they brought to their* **General Communion** *all the children to whom they had* **taught Christian doctrine** *on Sundays and holydays of obligation.*

Extraordinary fervor is manifested by these young women in school duties in the pursuit of perfection and in the exercises of Sodality life.

II.

The School-Mistresses' Sodality of Munich have a section which promotes **retreats for girls** from 15 to 20 years of age. According to the section's annual report for 1928, eight sessions were had. About 300 Sodalists contribute to its expenses, and **82** of them acted as prefects during the **31 retreats** which were given to a total of **2,000 girls**.

Experience taught the school-mistresses some new devices for the work. For instance, all the money needed for retreat expenses was collected by selling " *retreat saving stamps* " (1) again, both before and during the retreats much fervor was engendered and kept up by *moving pictures of the life of Our Lord.* Not every girl who applied to make a retreat was accepted, but a certain *selection* was exercised.

Moreover, a month after the retreat, the girls were again invited for a *day of recollection;* 1370 accepted. The auxiliary Bishop of Munich attended and H. E. Cardinal Faulhaber proposed the work as a model. (See " *Virgo Mater,*" 1928, p. 4).

The Bavarian School-mistresses' Sodalities now number 1600 members.

III.

During the past year the Schoolmistresses' Sodality of the diocese of **Augsburg, Bavaria,** through the exertions of its section which promotes retreats for girls, secured seven threeday retreats for girls' who were about to leave school. The Sodalists themselves every month have a day of recollection. Their Director is Father Victor Hugger, S. J.

(See " *A. O.*" 1926, p. 50, for other details touching these Sodalities).

(1) The substance of the " *retreat savings-stamps* " device must be as follows:

The exercitants are poor. They must save for weeks if not months to pay the expenses of their keep at the house of retreats and perhaps a voluntary contribution besides. If they set aside a little every day in their purses or in a savings-bank at home, they might be tempted to spend some of it before the time of the retreat, and thus find themselves unable to attend. A safer method of making up the amount is to deposit small amounts from time to time with the proper Sodality official and receive from her corresponding receipts. These are called " *retreat savings stamps* " Printed after the style of postage-stamps in certain denominations (e. g. one penny, five pennies) and in sheets on a certain quality of paper with anti-counterfeiting precautions, each stamp asserts that the bearer has paid a certain amount — one penny, five pennies — for her expenses at some house of retreats engaged by the Sodality, etc.

Arrived at the retreat-house, the exercitant can present her stamps in lieu of money, and the treasurer of the retreat-house can get his money by presenting the stamps thus received to the treasurer of the Sodality.

Of course, where there's a will there's a way. So that if the prospective exercitant absolutely desires her money back, she may be able to dispose of her stamps to some other retreatant; but such a purchaser will surely not be easy to find and thus the original buyer is protected against her own impulsiveness and improvidence.

LOCAL SODALITY CONGRESSES

These meetings have a very good effect on the Sodalities in general and on the members in particular. They afford an opportunity to many Sodalists to hear talks from leading Directors. There is inspiration also in seeing large numbers of fellow-Catholics who have the same aims.

The desire of a more fervent Sodality life is also a very natural result which shows itself in increased piety and in more activity.

Such a congress was held last year in **Boheimkirchen,** Austria, by seventeen Young Ladies Sodalities of the district. Sodalists and Directors discussed *the Holy Eucharist, works of charity, foreign missions, missions to the people.* **A mission exposition** prepared beforehand, greatly renewed the Sodalists' zeal.

At **Lichtenegg,** Austria, and **Ettal,** Bavaria, similar Congresses were held.

At **Frauen-Chiemsee,** Bavaria, the Sodalists of the district were joined by many others who came from a considerable distance. The *results of fraternal charity* among the Sodalists and the *relations of the Sodalities with other associations*, such as those for modest dress, gymnastics, missions, and the press, were discussed.

So too 350 delegates from the various *Young Ladies' Sodalities of* **Vienna,** met last October, and spent some six hours in discussing new ways and means of exercising the **lay apostolate in large cities**.

Father P. Pohl, S. J., began the sessions with a discourse on the *constitution and purpose* of the Sodality. A Sodalist pointed out certain *new works of charity;* another showed how Sodalists could bring *tepid and indifferent girls* to Christ; a third pictured the Sodalists as an *aid to the parish-priest;* and a fourth spoke on the relations of the Sodality to *the new Catholic organizations.*

Every discourse was followed by a practical discussion, and the day terminated with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Another extraordinary meeting of great value is the " *Day of recollection for the consultors* „ of the Sodalities, such as was held in Vienna last January.

HARMONIZING SODALITIES AND CATHOLIC YOUTH SOCIETIES

In some parts of Europe and America, there have been some differences and even friction between the "Catholic Youth" Societies and the Young Men's Sodalities of Our Lady.

To avoid such difficulties, the Provincials of our Society in Spain, at one of their meetings in 1926, formulated the following rules which may prove of interest elsewhere also.

"Now that the "*Spanish Catholic Youth Society*" has been founded in our country and its constituent "*Parochial Catholic Youth Societies*" are being established in accordance with the express will of the Holy See and in a manner analogous to that followed in other nations — it has seemed advisable that we Provincials should give certain general rules by which to determine the relations which should exist between those Societies and the Sodalities of Our Lady.

I.

The relations of the Sodalities of Our Lady with the Spanish Catholic Youth Society are very simple. It should be remembered that according to the idea of His Eminence, the Cardinal Primate, the S. C. Y. S. is merely **a Federation of all the Catholic societies for young people**, is directed by a Delegate of His Eminence, and permits each of its component units the most complete autonomy, reserving for itself the single right of directing all their **joint movements** so that all young men may present a united front throughout the whole of Spain for the defense of the Church.

This being the case, the Sodalities of Our Lady enthusiastically and whole-heartedly undertake to form a part of this Federation of Spanish Catholic Youth and to collaborate with it loyally and sincerely.

Hence it is manifestly unnecessary that the Sodalists *individually* enter the S. C. Y. S.; but it suffices for the purpose intended and deducible from His Eminence's idea, that the Sodalities *as societies*, enter the S. C. Y. S. in conformity with the express terms of one of the Statutes approved by His Eminence.

What the Sodalities shall have to do as integral parts of the S. C. Y. S., will become clearer as the association develops and necessities make themselves felt.

II.

A more difficult matter is the establishment of the relations which should exist between the Sodalities of Our Lady and the parochial units of the S. C. Y. S. Nevertheless, considering that their purposes far from being opposed are in great part common, we hope, counting on the good will of all, that both associations will develop freely and not only without friction but even with reciprocal advantages.

The Sodality of Our Lady pursues a merely religious purpose and aspires to form groups of perfect Christians and even apostles; authority in the Sodality, according to the Papal Bulls, resides absolutely in the Director although to ensure greater fitness in his determinations, he can count upon a body of consultors. The Parochial Catholic Youth Societies, besides their religious purpose, pursue a social one also, and hence allow their members greater liberty of action.

With this as a foundation, we can formulate two general principles which will regulate the relations between the two organizations, one touching their members, the other their works.

First: It seems **inadvisable to fill the Parochial Catholic Youth Societies in great part with Sodalists of Our Lady**, first, because such a practice is illusory, since *it would habituate us to the false appearance of having great numbers* to count upon, when in reality the same persons would constitute almost all the membership in each society; and besides, such a practice *tends to foster vanity* in the young people, for with such a multiplication of societies and posts of honor, without a proportional increase of individual members, one of two things must happen: either the same individuals hold all the offices and hence *believe themselves necessary;* or the offices are distributed among many, and *hardly anyone becomes accustomed to be directed and to obey;* two things which are both prejudicial to "Catholic Action" and still more so to societies which are intended for the training of youth. Nevertheless **the Sodalities of Our Lady can sometimes serve as a basis of organization** for the Parochial Catholic Youth Societies, or hold important offices in their governing bodies. Of course, to make such appointments it will be necessary for the Councillor of the P. C. Y. S. and the Director of the Sodality **to agree on the matter beforehand.**

Second: Similar understanding must accompany the prosecution of the works of zeal and other undertakings provided for by the statutes of both organizations, care being taken that whatever may occasion rivalry or collisions be avoided and that the members of both organizations work together and aid each other with great charity in the said apostolic activities.

Finally, all the foregoing shows the advisability of **holding meetings from time to time** in the presence of the Ordinary or his Delegate **of all the Reverend Councillors of Parochial Catholic Youth Societies and the Directors of the Sodalities of Our Lady**; likewise it appears how fitting it is that all our Fathers who are assigned to this ministry, should try to **be distinguished for submission to the respective Prelates**, so that the latter may in future be able to testify, as many of them recently did, that they give the first place to the Sodalities of Our Lady and have a very particular affection for them, precisely because in them they find the greatest promptness in attending to their suggestions and in following their lead."

TOWARDS THE ALTAR

Why become a priest?

By *Father Raoul Plus, S. J.* (Prov. *Champagne*).

II.

The Priesthood is **the most difficult of callings,** whether viewed in its requirements or its exercise.

1. What it requires.

Though possessed of the greatest powers, the priest remains a human being. And hence:

a) he must fear the slightest weakness of soul that might impair his ministry.

" A priest," as the commom saying goes, " is a man like others," - a false statement, if one regards the priest as endowed with *supernatural powers*, but very true indeed when only his *natural personality* is looked to. Hence the priest, since he exercises so lofty a ministry, must acquire pre-eminent virtue.

" The Church takes up fiery, impetuous, imaginative youths (like other Habacucs) by the hair of their heads, purifies them by prayer and penance, moulds them in meditation, subdues them through obedience, transfigures them by humility; and when the proper time has come prostrates them on the pavement of its temples, consecrates them with holy words, anoints them with oil; and behold, they are made chaste." (*Lacordaire*, " *Conference on Chastity* ", t. V, p. 44).

Now all those virtues, so necessary for ordination, are likewise necessary for the preservation of priestly fervor.

As the Catholic layman, *René Bazin*, puts it in his " *Sermon à un nouveau prêtre* " in " *Pages Religieuses* ":

" Today people expect of their parish-priest or his curate, almost the same austerity of life, the same reserve, zeal for souls and moderation which they look for in a religious... Dissolute morals have made people more exacting in their judgment of priests. Always keep this in mind and hold it for certain that unbelievers very deeply resent your being like them even in much that is lawful. To put the matter briefly: your *station in life* allows you to live like *seculars;* but *men* demand that you live like *religious*."

b) The priest must strive to acquire **all the virtues** which will help him to gain the greatest results possible in his ministry. Such are.

The principal virtues, especially:

Mental virtues, that is, sound judgment, strength of character, broad and deep knowledge of philosophy, theology, asceticism, etc.

Moral virtues, such as honesty, sincerity, integrity magnanimity, kindness, etc.

Virtues which will make it **pleasant to deal with him** as well as profitable.

Such are correct diction, polite manners, due regard for others' position and feelings (avoiding in all this however, unpleasant exaggerations);

an observing spirit tempered by prudence;

a varied and lively manner of speaking.

" *Godliness is profitable to all things*," as the apostle says (1 Tim., 4, 8), but his statement implies that there are other things beside godliness: Hence " The priest must be a man in the full sense of the word, an extraordinary man and extraordinarily manly." (See *Ollé Laprune*, " *La Vitalité chrétienne*," p. 144. Read the whole chapter: " *L'homme dans le prêtre*, " p. 142-155).

It is clear that the two-fold undertaking referred to above, i. e., the *negative* one, that there shall be no falls, and the *positive*, that one shall acquire the necessary priestly virtues by effort and self-conquest, calls for very hard labor, and besides God's grace, also requires great natural gifts.

2. The exercise of the Priesthood.

We have already spoken of the *chastity* required in the priest.

But how the priest must *labor* to become a " *sower of the Divine Word*," such as God wishes, the Gospel requires, and souls expect! How great *the charity* he needs in order to have pity on the necessities of all; how great the *contempt of worldly advantages* and the *austerity of life* required in order to gain the *authority* which will enable him to teach those virtues

b) Consider the **difficulties peculiar to our day.**

At present, priests are often forced to *live poorly* and sometimes even in *utter want*.

When, as often happens, they receive *little or nothing from the state*, and almost nothing from their *parishioners*, how can they manage to live?

In many provinces, *contempt* for the priest expresses itself in *brutal ostracism*.

Time was when the priest was in honor with every one but now although good people still esteem him, it is undeniable that the enemies of God regard him with *undying hatred*.

Listen to the notorious " *Guerre aux Pretres* ":

" The priest is the enemy! False, simulating, creeping, slimy, infamous, cowardly, he is an enemy who lurks in the darkness and strikes from behind. Implacable, cruel, inclement, obstinate, his hatred is hidden, and everlasting. Calling himself the minister of goodness, of pardon and clemency, he knows nothing of clemency or goodness or pardon. His only purpose, his only doctrine, his only faith, is to reduce the people into slavery, to make them his so that he may domineer over them, plunder them, and make assassins and robbers of them so as to establish and fortify religion. One purpose alone rules and moves ecclesiastics today, namely the extinction of freedom of thought, moral progress and culture.

" The complete eradication of this cancer which has fed upon society for so many centuries, is the special duty of " *lay* " society. While even one priest remains, the nations will never be free. The priests have lived long enough on the tears and blood, the sweat and labor, the liberty and ignorance of the people. For unnumbered centuries, the nations have groaned under clerical domination.

"The limit has been passed. The destinies of the nations are already in conflict with the darkness of a bygone age. In the Socialist State there is no place for priests!"

Numbers of men not at all inclined to Socialism, while not giving credit to every word of this notorious book, have nevertheless accepted the substance of its assertions.

Thus *Clemenceau* said after the war:

"I was exceedingly distrustful of the clergy, because I was convinced that they opposed our freedom of thought and were continually censuring us; hence at the beginning of the war, when I visited the soldiers in the trenches, I used to ask them:

"*Doesn't this chaplain here depress you?*"

"*Depress us! On the contrary he is a brave and excellent comrade, a model for us, always working to the limit. We have the highest regard for him.*"

"All the soldiers gave me the same answer. I had regiments asking me to decorate their chaplains on account of their brilliant services, and I was glad to call them out of the ranks, decorate them and embrace them." ("*Libre Parole*," Sept. 23, 1919).

Now while *Clemenceau's* words are a notable characterization of priests, they argue very little penetration in religious matters on his part, since it took a great war and a long life of 77 years to teach him what a priest is. Why did he never look closely at the priests he had come in contact with before?

If men like him, who are capable of reflecting on what they see, err so badly, what may be expected from persons who just because they cannot think for themselves, fall in behind the worst leaders?

As *Mgr. de Segur* well wrote: "Our blessed cassock is the target of the revolutionists; first the white one, then the purple and the violet, and lastly on a wider and easier scale, the humble black cassock."

(*Souvenirs et recits d'un frère*, t. II, p. 184)

And *Abbé Huvelin*, who was instrumental in *Father de Foucauld's* return to the Faith, gives the true cause of this hatred:

"Just as *Bernardin de St. Pierre* raved against the church-bells, so you have men who keep shouting against the cassock. Nobody likes to hear the church-bells, when he has turned his back completely on religion; the bell which tolls for the dead, recalls one's first Communion at a time when he used to assist at Mass. The priest's cassock is another vivid reminder of the fact, and the hatred it excites arises partly from ignorance, but especially from the vehement desire of avoiding a reproach of conscience. You may trust you have forgotten all about religion; you may wish with *Mathan* in "*Athalie*" (1) to stifle remorse of conscience with many heinous crimes, but in vain." (*Quelques directeurs d'âmes au XVII siècle*, p. 181).

(1) Racine's "*Athalie*" A. III, S. III, penultimate line. "A force d'attentats perdre tous mes remords."

In 1871, when our house at Marseilles was surrounded and *Father Calage* the superior was being taken into custody, one of his persecutors exclaimed:

"If you only knew how much I hate you."

"If you only knew how much I love you," was the Father's reply.

"I don't want your love, but your blood," retorted the persecutor.

"But why do you hate me," asked the Father, "since you don't even know me."

"Ah, but **I know the God you preach and I hate HIM.**"

The priest recalls heavenly things to memory and the recollection puts the guilty soul on the rack; hence the priest must expect the enmity of men who do not wish to bend their intellects to believe nor suffer their passions to be moderated by the laws of Christianity.

Virtue therefore is absolutely necessary for the man who would become a priest.

(To be continued).

Editor's Note:

We have been admonished that **what is said here** regarding poverty and disrespect suffered by priests, **does not apply to English-speaking lands.** There the Catholic clergy is loved by Catholics, respected by numbers of non-Catholics, and generously supported by the voluntary contributions of the faithful both as regards their personal needs and the various institutions, — churches, schools, hospitals, etc. — which they direct. And, God be thanked, all this is true.

Still we think that there is something inviting and inspiring to young hearts in the story of the difficulties and hatred which other young men are generously facing in undertaking to become priests in other lands. Young men have joined the Society, for instance, where the Church is free, just because they learned that she was often the first organization to feel the blows of persecution. The desire and secret hope of martyrdom will ever be a powerful lure for many to give themselves wholly to the service of Christ.

Moreover, it may not be out of place to suggest that the forces of bigotry and hatred while by no means so powerful in English-speaking as in Latin lands, are still just as venomous in their utterances, and in a quieter way but with disquieting persistency, are pursuing their nefarious aims. What was quoted above from revolutionary and Socialistic books can be seen with great frequency today in the books and periodicals of those parties printed in English. They are repeated from soap-boxes and public platforms in the daily preachments of radicals. Children are taught them in "catechism" classes. Again, the unceasing **warfare on the private school** because the Catholic faith can be taught in it, is ardently carried on by many *Masons* in various English-speaking lands. Ten years ago, Bolshevism, with its hatred of Christianity was far away from any of those countries; but now its organized propaganda is worrying many of them, and Bolshevism seems to be the ruling force in Mexico at present. Such movements spell hatred for the priesthood, and

perhaps **effective** hatred in a not far distant future. Those who are engaged in them are constantly counting on the working rule, already verified in more than one modern state, that *militant minorities can impose their will on unwilling but unorganized majorities.* The germ of their success may lie in the propaganda we have referred to.

In any case, it seems to us profitable for the prospective candidate to the priesthood to be shown the height and the depth and the breadth of the sacrifice which may finally be demanded of him. For truly generous hearts it can prove an incentive.

A SODALITY CENTENARY

IN YE OLDEN TIME

" *Acht-Tagiges Danck-Fest Von der Löbl: und Burgerlichen Bruderschafft Unter dem Titel* **Mariae** *Himmelfahrt Bey dem Collegio der Societet* **Jesu** *zu Augspurg Sambt Der Löblichen Bruderschafft* **Mariae** *Reinigung der Jungen Gesellen allda angestellet.*"

Such is the title of a little booklet published shortly after the event it commemorates. It tells entertainingly how the Citizens' and Young Men's Sodalities, of Augsburg, Bavaria, in 1713, celebrated the 100th anniversary of their foundation.

Goldsmiths and metal-workers among the Sodalists renovated all the silver objects in the Church; painters gave their best work for a merely nominal sum; merchant Sodalists made gifts of vestments, altar furnishings and considerable sums of money. The church was sumptuously decorated, and the altars received special attention from an extraordinarily able decorator.

" *As the purpose of this praiseworthy Sodality of Our Lady in instituting this joyful celebration was solely the exercise of devotion,*" the Sodality gave itself to piety, securing the celebration on eight consecutive days of pontifical High Mass, recitation of the rosary, singing of the Litanies, sermon and solemn benediction. The first day was Saturday, August 13th. At 5 o'clock on the morning of the 2d day, the consultors of the Citizens Sodality began the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament exposed; and they were succeeded an hour later by the consultors of the Young Men's Sodality. A solemn procession one afternoon, was broken up by a great storm, everyone being compelled to hurry to cover either in the church or in houses. The procession on the following Sunday, however, was quite a success.

Eight floats appeared in it, representing:

1) **The Blessed Virgin Mary, surrounded by 4 towers:** David, Sichem, Gold, Ivory; all intended to show that *the Sodality is a strong city* which the Sodalists enter and which they defend, as was represented in the

2d float, a tower before the walls, occupied by soldiers **battling against the boy "Cupid"; the Sodalists' arms** being the *shields of meditation,* evening *examen of conscience, confession and communion, daily Mass, the weekly meeting,* etc. The

3d) float showed **the golden house of graces** which the Blessed Virgin and her Divine Son, so lavishly distributes to the Sodalists.

Next came (4) **an arsenal:** in which Mary with a rosary in one hand and the rules of the Sodality in the other, invited the Sodalists to battle; while the arms and armor were hairshirts, scourges, switches, rosaries, etc. But as the ordinary exercises of the Sodality could be regarded as spiritual arms, **6 hand-barrows** followed with symbolical representations of the Sodality meetings, pious books, the formula of consecration, the monthly patron, and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament exposed.

The 5th float was destined to show that *Sodalists do not excessively fear the judgment* and that in the Sodality, it is easy to render the Supreme Judge favorable, since the Sodalists diligently judge themselves in the daily examination of conscience and in preparation for frequent confession.

That *the Sodality is* **a provision-ship** in which the angels distribute bread from heaven, was the idea represented in the 6th float, while

The seventh showed the Sodality as **a pharmacy** filled with manifold remedies against the Sodalists' ills.

Again in the 8th float, the Sodality appeared as **a city of refuge** for the reputation of its members after death since it comes to their aid.

Aptly enough **two hand-barrows** followed, the first signifying the agreement entered into by many Sodalities to apply their *suffrages for all Sodalists,* the other showed the generosity of the Citizens' Sodality which had arranged that two priests should *alternate in saying a Mass in our Church every day* throughout the year for the living and dead members.

" *So that the Sodalists should not be too much fatigued with prayers and ceremonies,* **the Sodality put on a play** *for them entitled* " **The Marian Crown of Stars** *placed by two praiseworthy confraternities on Queen Mary to celebrate her Assumption into heaven.*" *Three performances were given, women being admitted only to the third. The actors belonged to the Young Men's Sodality, who were very keen for that sort of thing, and besides having good memories, took part in theatricals every year.*" A hundred actors with great ceremony offered the Empress of Heaven **twelve stars** — representing humility, zeal, observance of the Rules, fortitude, devotion to the Blessed Virgin, purity, trust, charity towards the poor, hope, liberality, perseverance, and conformity with Christ. These stars received their light from the holy deeds of some of the Sodalists.

The last chapter mentions the then recent reprint of a book which was first published by the same Sodality *more than eighty years before,* and from which the idea of the pageant of 1713 was taken.

From the whole tone of the centenary account of 1713, it appears that the Sodalities were flourishing and fervent in Augsburg, and in great honor both with Catholics and Protestants.

THE ST. LOUIS STUDENT SODALITIES CONVENTION

August 17, 18, 19, 1928

Referring to the Sodality convention, a writer in "*The (Missouri) Province News-Letter*" for May, 1928, p. 58, says:

"*The success of the present convention is assured since Father Lord has addressed nearly* **10,000 students** and **1,000 teachers** *from* **231** *schools in* **19** *different cities since last October 15. The real hope is to get our* **Jesuit Sodalists to take the commanding lead** *that is theirs by every right and tradition.*"

Ours demanded this convention, first, in the Missouri Province Sodality Directors' meeting of 1924, second, in the Jesuit Sodality Directors' National Conference, at Chicago in August, 1926.

Other Catholic societies know the value of these national gatherings and hold them frequently. Thus:

The Catholic Students' Mission Crusade has had five big conventions in ten years.

The Holy Name Society has a national demonstration annually or biennially.

The Third Order of St. Francis (1) has something of the sort every few years.

The National Council of Catholic Men,

The National Council of Catholic Women,

The Knights of Columbus, etc. make much of their annual convention.

The Protestant Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, which boasts of having sent out 12,000 missionaries in 40 years, had 3,500 students in their tenth quadrennial National Convention (U. S. and Canada) held at Detroit, Michigan, last December.

Protestant students in the U. S. A. last year held over 600 large district conferences, and this summer there will will be ten large vacation conferences, each lasting over a week and concerned with religious, moral, ethical and social problems.

Convention advertising matter of various sorts issues continually from "*The Queen's Work*" Office. "*The Free Lance of the Queen*" carries many items regarding the Convention, which attract attention on the Sodality Bulletin Boards. Directors will find it worth while to keep carefully in chronological order all of these letters, leaflets, posters and bulletins, because they will furnish many useful suggestions as to how to advertise Sodality Union meetings. Directors of individual Sodalities, or better still the heads of Sodality Sections, will get good hints from them on publicity for Sodality activities.

Great care and foresight has been exercised by the promotors of the convention, and as this is not the first event of the sort in which they have had a hand, they are thoroughly aware of its difficulties and are keeping their public well informed as to the how those difficulties are to be overcome or properly evaded.

The many Sodality Unions which were formed (usually under the presidency of our college Sodalities) in the various cities where Sodality Schools were held, are helping toward the success of the National Sodality Convention.

The mere experience of *getting together* for three days in the Schools has proved beneficial. It has made Catholic students' acquainted with each other and they have learned the value of cooperation. At the invitation of the head Sodalities, some joint religious functions have been held.

"*The Sodality is easily the oldest student organization in the world*", says a recent Sodality Bulletin of **Loyola University, Chicago,** "*but don't be a member unless you earnestly plan to attend the meetings.*"

"*I had hoped to be in St. Louis for the meeting of the Sodalists this summer,*" wrote a Director who had been at the Directors Conference in Chicago in 1926. "*The meeting however is only for the representatives of Students Sodalities.*" That's Director spirit. When the call goes out for a **Parish** Sodality Convention, as we hope will be the case in 1930, this Director will have his day.

"*Interest in the Sodality Bulletin Board at S. S. College, C..., died down just a little.*"

"Yes", whispered the Pessimist, "that's the way with all these movements. A flash in the pan, a sharp report, a little smoke, and... nothing more."

"Don't you believe it", said the Old Observer, "these spiritual affairs are full of ups and downs; but there's usually a gain made, especially where the work is good and set on a sound basis. "*Let us also go that we may die with Him*", said Thomas. But when it was time to keep his word, Thomas was nowhere to be found. *However*, that was *the first time.* When his *second* chance came, he made good. Same way here, Father; and if it weren't so, we might as well despair of our own salvation."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Rev. Thomas F. Ryan, Dublin, Ireland, 100 Lit.; Sodality of Our Lady Help of Christians, per Rev. Charles Farley, S. J., Director, Dublin, Ireland, 460 Lit.

Editor: *Lawrence E. O'Keeffe, S. J.*
Superiorum permissu.

Printed by the Tipografia Campitelli - Via Orazio Coclite - Roma

(1) Their propaganda literature has a familiar sound. "We have a complete program of life", they say "and yet many are persuaded that the Third Order is *for women only* and that its work all lies in saying *a few prayers.*"